NRCS
Natural Resources Conservation Service
3737 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302

December 16, 2005

Mr. Donald Silawsky
Office of Petroleum Reserves (FE-47)
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20585-0301

RE: Proposed Expansion of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve-Reopening Scoping Comment Period and New Site Proposal

Dear Mr. Silawsky:

As per your request, my office has reviewed the soils information for the project areas in Louisiana concerning prime farmlands. We have also addressed hydric soils as they may pertain to wetland issues. The results are as follows:

The new proposed Chacahoula site is in Lafourche parish. The enclosed soil survey indicates the soils at this site to be the BB--Barbary-Fausse association. This map unit is not prime farmland. The soils are hydric and wetlands may be present if there is a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation and wetland hydrology. Deposition of fill material in wetland areas is subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. You should contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers concerning wetland matters. The new crude oil pipeline from the Chacahoula site to Clovelly was also reviewed. This 50-mile pipeline crosses several prime farmland and hydric soils. See the nine enclosed interpretative farmland classification soils maps and nine hydric classification soil maps for location of soils affected. The brine disposal pipeline to the Gulf of Mexico and the oil distribution pipeline to the St. James terminal were not evaluated due to the imagery indicating existing pipelines. If existing pipeline right-of-ways are used, then no additional land use changes or prime farmlands should be affected.

The new proposed Clovelly site is also in Lafourche parish. The enclosed soil survey indicates the soils at this site to be the LA—Lafitte-Clovelly Association. This map unit is also not prime farmland. They are hydric and wetland issues may have to be addressed through the Corps.

The proposed expansion of the existing West Hackberry site is in Cameron parish. The enclosed soil survey indicates the soils at this site to be the Cw—Crowley-Vidrine silt loams (prime farmland), Mt—Mowata-Vidrine silt loams (prime farmland), GC—Gentilly muck (not prime farmland), and CO—Clovelly muck (not prime farmland). The Mt, GC, and CO map units are hydric and may be subject to wetland issues.

The proposed expansion of the existing Bayou Choctaw site is in Iberville parish. The enclosed soil survey indicates the soils at this site to be the Sg—Sharkey clay (prime farmland), Tu—Tunica clay (prime farmland), and Se—Schriever clay, frequently flooded (not prime farmland). The Sg and Se map units are hydric and may be subject to wetland issues. The Tu map unit is not hydric.

If these proposed projects are approved and federal funding is involved with the construction,

then the enclosed forms AD-1006 (Farmland Conversion Impact Rating) and NRCS-CPA-106 (Farmland Conversion Impact Rating for Corridor Type Projects) will have to completed. Part 1 and 3 are done by the federal agency making the request, and part 2, 4, and 5 are done by NRCS.

If additional information is needed, please contact Charles Guillory, Assistant State Soil Scientist, at [redacted].

Sincerely,

Donald W. Gohmert
State Conservationist

Cc: Jerry J. Daigle, State Soil Scientist
Charles M. Guillory, Assistant State Soil Scientist

Enclosures